

REMARKS

Claims 26-28 are pending.

Claim 26 is allowed.

Claims 27-28 are rejected.

The office action dated August 3, 2006 indicates that claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for two reasons: (1) there is no relationship between a reader and controller; and (2) the limitations of claim 27 are not sufficient to perform the functions of a drive. The office action also indicates that claim 27 is further rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Menzees in view of Chuang U.S. Patent No. 6,003,151, and that claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Menzees.

This '112 rejection based on the first reason has been rendered moot by the amendment above to claim 27.

The prosecution of this application has been unnecessarily prolonged. This is a tenth office action (including three office actions on the parent application), the '112 rejections should have been made earlier, and allowance of claims 27-28 has been withdrawn in view of a reference that is no more relevant than other references cited in the previous office actions. For instance, Menzees is no more relevant than Schneier, which describes XOR encryption (Schneier was cited in the office action dated November 10, 2004).

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To bring this prolonged prosecution to a conclusion, the '112 rejection based on the second reason will be appealed. The '102 and '103 rejections of claims 27 and 28 will also be appealed. An appeal is proper, since at least one final office action has already been issued (on June 3, 2004). A Notice of Appeal will be filed shortly hereafter.

Respectfully submitted,

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